

Dear Commissioners:

I believe that the San Fernando Valley—the entire San Fernando Valley should be represented by one County Supervisor.

My parents were living in the southeastern end of the San Fernando Valley in 1945 when I was born. Although I did spend some time in other areas of the city of Los Angeles, I moved back into the San Fernando Valley in 1968, living first in North Hollywood. For the last 51 years, I have lived in the far western end of the Valley—Woodland Hills, Canoga Park, and West Hills. I have taught at two community colleges in the Valley, very briefly at Los Angeles Valley College in Valley Glen and for almost 50 years at Los Angeles Pierce College in Woodland Hills. I am an Emeritus Professor of Anthropology who also taught sociology and linguistics. I mention this background for two reasons. First, I believe that I know the Valley quite well. Second, as a social scientist, I have had fifty years of experience observing the culture of the Valley and its demographics.

Before the Second World War, much of the Valley was farmland. In the 1950's and onward the Valley became a “bedroom community” for people, mostly people who in popular terms were working class “white people” looking to escape the intercity for various reasons and attracted to the lower price of housing. There were also very rich mostly “white people” who bought up large area of the valley. In the 1950s about 90% of the permanent population of the Valley was “White”. Today that is far from the case. By the 2010 census, people with Hispanic heritage slightly outnumbered the “white” population in the Valley 42% to 41%. The remaining people were from a variety of groups. I saw this change in demographics reflected in my classrooms over the years.

The point is that the Valley as a whole is a very diverse area. The argument that the Valley needs to be carved up to create various sections each of which are predominately one ethnicity or “race” is not valid in my opinion. All of the people of the Valley have common interests in the areas of medical care, schooling, social justice, transportation, policing, housing, traffic, and so forth.

In my years at Pierce, the majority of my students came from Valley high schools and if they went on to a four-year school, a large number went to California State University Northridge. In fact, Pierce had a number of programs where a student could start an academic path and then complete it at CSUN. I was part of a program called the PEPP program, where students took classes required for an education degree for two years at Pierce and then finished their classes at CSUN. It was an accelerated program where a student could get their Bachelor's degree and Teaching Credential in four years instead of the usual five

to six years. The point is that over the years close relationships have been formed between various areas of the Valley. Many of those relationships relate to unique needs of Valley residents.

Over the years the San Fernando Valley has developed its own culture—represented in numerous movies and even by Frank Zappa’s biggest hit song “Valley Girl”. The song and other portrayals of the Valley led to “Valley Girl talk”.

At any rate, with over 1,800,000 residents, the San Fernando Valley is a natural area to be one Supervisorial district. It is compact, contiguous, and is an area of unified common interest.

Sincerely,  
Bruce M. Rowe  
Emeritus Professor of Anthropology  
Los Angeles Pierce College.  
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